

Frequently Asked COVID Vaccination Questions

“Are the vaccines safe for me to take?”

Yes. The NHS will not offer any Covid-19 vaccinations to the public until independent experts have signed off that it is safe to do so.

As with any medicine, vaccines are highly regulated products.

There are checks at every stage in the development and manufacturing process, and continued monitoring once it has been authorised and is being used in the wider population.

“Can I get the vaccine if I am pregnant or breastfeeding?”

Yes. It's strongly recommended that you get vaccinated against coronavirus (COVID-19) if you're pregnant or breastfeeding.

You're at higher risk of getting seriously ill from COVID-19 if you're pregnant. If you get COVID-19 late in your pregnancy, your baby could also be at risk.

The vaccines cannot give you or your baby COVID-19.

If you're breastfeeding

You cannot catch COVID-19 from the vaccines and cannot pass it to your baby through your breast milk.

“Will the vaccine make me infertile?”

No. There's **no evidence** the COVID-19 vaccines have any effect on your chances of becoming pregnant or your fertility.

There's no need to avoid getting pregnant after being vaccinated.

“What is in the vaccine?”

The COVID-19 vaccines **do not contain egg, human tissue or animal products.**

The Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine contains a tiny amount of alcohol, but this is less than in some everyday foods like bread.

You can find out about the ingredients in the vaccines currently available in the UK:

- [Moderna COVID-19 vaccine patient leaflet on GOV.UK](#)
- [Oxford/AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine patient leaflet on GOV.UK](#)
- [Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine patient leaflet on GOV.UK](#)

“If I take the vaccine, can I still catch COVID-19?”

Like all other vaccines, COVID-19 vaccines are not 100% effective against the disease, however you are **less likely to catch and spread it**. We also know that vaccinated people who catch COVID-19 are at a lower risk of severe illness.

Even if vaccinated, it still important that you take measures to protect yourself and other people, e.g., social distancing where possible and wearing a face covering.

“I’ve already caught COVID-19, do I need the vaccine?”

Yes. Even if you have already had COVID-19, you should be vaccinated.

The protection that someone gets from having had COVID-19 will vary greatly from person to person. The immunity people get from being vaccinated is consistently very strong. Getting vaccinated even if you have had COVID-19 means you are more likely to be protected for longer.

“Does being vaccinated stop me from spreading the virus onto others?”

There is some evidence that being fully vaccinated can prevent you from becoming infected with COVID-19. This means that being vaccinated is likely to help protect people around you by making it less likely that you will pick up the virus and pass it on.

Getting vaccinated is a positive action you can take to protect yourself and your local community.

“I’m young and low risk, why should I bother?”

Anyone can get COVID-19, including young people, and anyone can spread it. Getting vaccinated is one of the best things you can do to protect yourself and others around you from the virus, vaccines reduce infections, hospitalisations and deaths from COVID-19.

The average age of people in intensive care is 60, but people much younger have been seriously ill and died of Covid, with thousands more still suffering

the effects of Long Covid after what might have been a mild initial case.

“If the vaccines are effective, why do I need a Booster?”

A booster dose of the coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine helps improve the protection you have from your first 2 doses of the vaccine. It helps give you longer-term protection against getting seriously ill from COVID-19.

A booster serves as a reminder to the body’s immune system of the virus it needs to defend against. This improves or gives the immune system a boost.

“Should people with cancer get the vaccine?”

Public health experts and cancer specialists have agreed that people living with cancer should receive the vaccine. The coronavirus vaccines that are available can be given to people who are having cancer treatment. Vaccines save lives and reduce the need for hospital stays from coronavirus.

Vaccines can be given before, during or after cancer treatment. If you are due to start cancer treatment or have cancer surgery your medical team may recommend that you have a vaccination before treatment begins. Having a vaccination before treatment gives a better chance of protection.

There have been reports from women and some trans men around the world about menstrual changes following the vaccine, including unexpected spotting and bleeding. In some cases, some people's periods have come early or been particularly heavy or painful.

However, the effect on periods is temporary - for most people their periods went back to normal within a few months.

This has affected a very small number of people, and for the vast majority, the benefits of getting vaccinated far outweigh the risks.

“Will the vaccine affect my sex drive?”

There is no evidence suggesting that the approved COVID-19 vaccines lead to decreased male libido or fertility.

In contrast, there is some early evidence that suggests catching COVID-19 can contribute to erectile dysfunction (ED) and other complications with sexual performance.

“Is it okay to mix and match my COVID-19 vaccines?”

Studies have found that mixing and matching vaccines produces a safe, effective, and sometimes even stronger immune response than having the same jab twice.

Any of the approved vaccines is better compared to no vaccine, and two doses are better than one, and you can always raise any concerns you may have about the vaccine with the clinical professional at your appointment.

You can also call the South West London helpline on 0203 880 0338 if you have **any** questions ahead of booking your appointment.

“Who has the vaccine been tested on?”

The approved COVID-19 vaccines have been tested on thousands of people in the UK and around the world, including:

- people from different ethnic backgrounds
- people aged between 18 and 84
- children and young people aged between 12 and 17
- people with different health conditions

All vaccines used in the UK must be approved by the independent Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).

At this point in time, 11.3 Billion doses of the vaccine have been administered, and 4.55 Billion people are fully vaccinated.